

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 PRAGUE 00958 01 OF 03 150343Z

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 3 PRAGUE 0958

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, NATO, CSCE, CZ

SUBJECT: SEMI-ANNUAL CSCE MONITORING REPORT

REFS A. 77 PRAGUE 3173, B. STATE 65811 C. 76 STATE 84043

D. 76 STATE 224882 E. PRAGUE 0807

1. SUMMARY: IN RECENT MONTHS THE HIGHLIGHT OF CSCE DIPLOMACY WAS, OF COURSE, THE BELGRADE MEETING, AND THERE CZECHOSLOVAKIA WAS THE PRINCIPAL WHIPPING BOY OF THE WESTERN DELEGATIONS CONCERNED OVER EASTERN FAILURE TO HONOR HUMAN RIGHTS PRECEPTS OF THE HELSINKI FINAL ACT. WHILE WE BELIEVE CZECHOSLOVAKIA'S RECORD OF IMPLEMENTATION OF FINAL ACT PROVISIONS MERITS THE OPPROBRIUM ITS REPRESENTATIVES ENCOUNTERED AT BELGRADE, WE THINK IT IS IMPORTANT TO LAY A LARGE PORTION OF THE BLAME FOR THIS SITUATION SQUARELY ON THE SOVIETS FOR THEIR CONTINUING TIGHT GRIP OVER BOTH INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL ASPECTS OF

CZECHOSLOVAK POLICIES. INDEED, WE WOULD NOT DISMISS AS ENTIRELY UNFOUNDED WIDESPREAD SPECULATION IN PRAGUE THAT THE SOVIETS AND THEIR AGENTS HERE CALLED FOR THE OCTOBER, 1977 TRIAL OF FOUR HUMAN RIGHTS ACTIVISTS--AN EVENT WHICH VIRTUALLY GUARANTEED THAT CZECHOSLOVAKIA, AND NOT THE SOVIET UNION, WOULD TAKE THE BRUNT
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PAGE 02 PRAGUE 00958 01 OF 03 150343Z

OF CRITICISM BY NON-COMMUNIST DELEGATIONS IN THE FALL DEBATE AT BELGRADE. IN ANY CASE, THE PERIOD SINCE OUR LAST REPORT(REF A) HAS SEEN LITTLE IMPROVEMENT. MINOR GAINS WERE POSTED IN BASKET TWO, WITH THE REGISTRATION OF THREE MORE AMERICAN FIRMS, AND IN THE HUMAN CONTACTS SECTION OF BASKET THREE, WITH SEVERAL FAMILY REUNIFICATIONS. OTHER DISIDERATA OF BASKET THREE FARED LESS WELL, PARTICULARLY RELIGIOUS CONTACTS, TOURISM, AND INFORMATION. IT

LOOKS TO US AS IF CZECHOSLOVAKS HAVE BEEN IMPLEMENTING PRIMARILY THOSE PRINCIPLES OF THE FINAL ACT WHICH THIS IN THEIR INTEREST TO IMPLEMENT--ALWAYS KEEPING A STEP BEHIND THE SOVIET'S LEAD. ONE CAN IMAGINE THEIR ACTING VUATUALLY THE SAME DID THE HELSINKI FINAL ACT NOT EXIST. END SUMMARY. END SUMMARY.

2. WITH MINOR EXCEPTIONS, CZECHOSLOVAKIA HAS MADE LITTLE PROGRESS ON CSCE IMPLEMENTATION DURING THE LAST SIX MONTHS. THOUGH THERE HAVE BEEN SOME GESTURES TOWARDS FULFILLING FINAL ACT PROVISIONS, SUCH AS "ARTICLE 58" ON NORMALIZATION OF STATUS OF EMIGRANTS, AND MUCH BOASTING, SUPPORTED BY SPECIOUS STATISTICS, TO "PROVE" HOW WELL THE CSSR IS IMPLEMENTING CSCE, OUR OWN VIEW OF THE MATTER IS THAT GOC HAS DONE VERY MUCH AS IT WOULD HAVE DONE WERE THERE NO HELSINKI FINAL ACT. FREE INFORMATION FLOW CANNOT BE SAID TO EXIST HERE, EXCEPT AS FACILITATED BY WESTERN RADIO AND TELEVISION BROADCASTING, SOME OF WHICH (RFE) IS STILL JAMMED. THE TRICLE OF FOREIGN NEWSPAPERS WHIIJ# BDAN#IN MARCH, 1977 HAS, IF ANYTHING, DWINDLED. IT WAS WINDOW-DRESSING FROM THE START, WITH EXAMPLES OF THE FOREIGN PRESS (E.G. TURKEY'S CUMHURIYET) CAREFULLY CHOSEN NOT TO APPEAL TO THE NORMAL READER. THERE HAS BEEN PROGRESS IN THE GOC/VATICAN NEGOTIATIONS AIMED AT IMPROVING THE CONDITIONS FOR THE CATHOLIC CHURCH, BUT THE RECENT INVESTITURE OF CARDINAL TOMASEK AS PRAGUE'S ARCHBISHOP WAS MARRED AS FAR AS AUSTRIA WAS CONCERNED WHEN GOC PREVENTED AN AUSTRIAN BISHOP FROM ATTENDING THE CEREMONY, IN VIOLATION OF THE SPIRIT OF CSCE PROVISIONS FOR CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 03 PRAGUE 00958 01 OF 03 150343Z

RELIGIOUS CONTACTS (PRAGUE 0807). WHILE WE CANNOT SAY WITH ANY ACCURACY WHETHER MORE CZECHS AND SLOVAKS ARE BEING ALLOWED TO TRAVEL, WE HEAR ENOUGH GRIPING ABOUT TRAAVEL RESTRICTIONS TO ASSUME THAT THEY STILL CONSTITUTE A MAJOR COMPLAINT, ESPECIALLY OF THE YOUNG. AS FOR HUMAN CONTACTS, THIS EMBASSY HAS RECENTLY HAD CAUSE TO PROTEST THE INTERROGATION AND CONSEQUENT INTIMIDATION OF VISITORS TO THE EMBASSY LIBRARY AND CONSULAR SECTION BY UNIFORMED POL ICE. (PRAGUE 715).

3. ITEM 6 -- WORKING CONDITIONS FOR BUSINESSMEN

A. THERE HAS BEEN NO SIGNIFICANT IMPROVEMENT OF BUSINESS CONTACTS OR ACCESS TO END-USERS OF IMPORTED GOODS.

B. POSSIBILITIES FOR ESTABLISHING PERMANENT REPRESENTATION HAVE IMPROVED SLIGHTLY. GOC HAS EVIDENTLY BECOME SLIGHTLY MORE FLEXIBLE AND PROMPT IN INTERPRETING ITS OWN 1975-76 RULES CONCERNING THE OPENING OF LOCAL REPRESENTATION OFFICES BY WESTERN FIRMS. THREE AMERICAN FIRMS HAVE JUST GOTTEN APPROVAL TO OPEN OFFICES, AND ANOTHER MAY BE APPROVED SOON, FOR A TOTAL OF FOUR. OFFICIALS OF THE FIRST FIRM TO OPEN SUCH AN OFFICE SAY THEY RECEIVED

MORE EXPEDITIOUS AND FAVORABLE TREATMENT WHEN THEY APPLIED IN
LATE 1977 THAN DID NON-U.S. FIRMS WHICH APPLIED PREVIOUSLY.

C. HOTEL ACCOMODATION, MEANS OF COMMUNICATION AND BUSINESS
AND RESIDENTIAL PREMISES CONTINUE TO BE MAJOR PROBLEMS FOR

WESTERN BUSINNSSMEN IN PRAGUE.

D. THERE HAS BEEN NO APPRECIABLE INCREASE IN AVAILABILITY OF
ECONOMIC AND COMMERCIAL INFORMATION.

E. THE VARIETY AND NUMBER OF COOPERATIVE ARRANGEMENTS WITH
U.S. FIRMS HAS REMAINED ESSENTIALLY UNCHANGED.

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PAGE 04 PRAGUE 00958 01 OF 03 150343Z

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PAGE 01 PRAGUE 00958 02 OF 03 150354Z

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 3 PRAGUE 0958

4. ITEM 7 -- FAMILY MEETINGS (PERIOD JULY-DECEMBER, 1977)

A. DEPARTMET PROVIDING DATA.

B. IT IS RELATIVELY MORE DIFFICULT FOR CZECHOSLOVAKS TO OBTAIN

EXIT PERMISSION TO VISIT WESTERN COUNTRIES (INCLUDING YUGOSLAVIA) THAN TO VISIT ANOTHER COMMUNIST COUNTRY. FACTORS WHICH AUTHORITIES WEIGH IN DECIDING WHETHER TO GRANT EXIT PERMIT INCLUDE CLOSENESS OF RELATIVES TO BE VISITED (USUALLY THEY MUST BE IMMEDIATE FAMILY) AND WHETHER RELATIVES ARE ABROAD "ILLEGALLY" IN EYES OF GOC, AS WELL AS POLITICAL RECORD OF THE APPLICANT AND WHETHER HE IS LIKELY TO STAY ABROAD. AS FOR VISAS TO VISIT CZECHOSLOVAKIA, AMERICANS OF CZECHOSLOVAK ORIGIN WHO EMIGRATED ILLEGALLY ARE OFTEN REFUSED ENTRY PERMISSION.

C. THE CZECHOSLOVAK AUTHRITIES PROCLAIMED A "NORMALIZATION" PROGRAM FOR EMIGRES LAST SUMMER WHICH THEY SAID WOULD ENABLE PARTICIPANTS MORE EASILY TO MAKE FAMILY VISITS TO CZECHOSLOVAKIA AND TO RECEIVE VISITS FROM THEIR RELATIVES. DURING THE REPORTING PERIOD THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS DECLARED THAT NATURALIZATION AS AN AMERICAN CITIZEN HAS AS ITS EFFECT AUTOMATIC

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 PRAGUE 00958 02 OF 03 150354Z

"NORMALIZATION." ALSO, FOR THOSE NOT YET NATURALIZED, SEVERAL STREAMLINING SIMPLICATIONS OF THE "NORMALIZATION" PROCEDURE WERE INSTITUTED, PURPORTEDLY FOR THE PURPOSE OF FACILITATING FAMILY VISITS ON A HUMANITARIAN BASIS EVEN FOR EMIGRES STILL DEEMED TO BE ABROAD "ILLEGALLY". WE LACK HARD DATA TO PERMIT AN ASSESSMENT OF WHETHER THESE DEVELOPMENTS HAVE OCCASIONED ANY REAL INCREASE.

5. ITEM 8 -- FAMILY REUNIFICATION

A. DURING THE LAST SIX MONTHS OF 1977, 22 CZECHOSLOVAK CITIZENS APPLIED FOR U.S. IMMIGRANT VISAS FOR THE PURPOSE OF BEING REUNITED WITH

THEIR RELATIVES (21 NUCLEAR FAMILY MEMBERS AND ONE NON-NUCLEAR APPLICANT).

B. DEPARTMENT PROVIDING DATA

C. AS OF DECEMBER, 1977, OUR DIVIDED FAMILIES LIST CONSISTED OF 65 INDIVIDUALS (35 NUCLEAR FAMILY MEMBERS AND 30 NON-NUCLEAR FAMILY MEMBERS).

D. DEGREE OF DIFFICULTY AFA DELAY EXPERIENCED BY CZECHOSLOVAKS WHO APPLY FOR FAMILY REUNIFICATION VARIES GREATLY FROM CASE TO CASE AND DEPENDS TO A CONSIDERABLE EXTENT ON THE LOCAL OFFICIALS WHO PROCESS THE REQUEST. IN GENERAL, PERSONS APPLYING TO EMIGRATE MAY BE THE OBJECTS OF SOME SCORN AND BUREAUCRATIC HARASSMENT, RANGING FROM THE PETTY TO LOSS OF AN APARTMENT OR JOB. SOME WIVES AND CHILDREN LEFT BEHIND BY CZECHS AND SLOVAKS WHO EMIGRATED AFTER THE WARSAW PACT INVASION OF 1968 CONTINUE, NINE YEARS LATER, TO BE PREVENTED FROM REJOINING THEIR FAMILIES

IN THE WEST.
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PAGE 03 PRAGUE 00958 02 OF 03 150354Z

E. DURING THE LAST TWO MONTHS OF 1977 WE EXPERIENCED AN INCREASE IN THE RATE OF RESOLUTION OF DIVIDED FAMILY CASES. NINE CASES WERE RESOLVED DURING NOVEMBER AND DECEMBER INVOLVING 15 PERSONS.

F. FEES FOR AN EMIGRATION PERMIT RANGE FROM 160KCS TO 10,000KCS DEPENDING ON THE AMOUNT OF EDUCATION WHICH MUST BE COMPENSATED FOR.

6. ITEM 9 - BINATIONAL MARRIAGES

A. TWO BINATIONAL MARRIAGES CAME TO OUR ATTENTION DURING THE REPORTING PERIOD.

B. PROBABLY, MORE ENTRY VISAS WERE ISSUED FOR THE PURPOSES OF MARRIAGE THAN THE TWO MARRIAGE CASES REFERRED TO IN 8-A WOULD INDICATE. AT LEAST ONE U.S. CITIZEN WAS DENIED AN ENTRY VISA TO ENABLE HIM TO MARRY. THE CZECHOSLOVAK GOVERNMENT DOES NOT GRANT EXIT PERMISSION FOR THE PURPOSE OF CONTRACTING MARRIAGE.

C. THREE NEWLY MARRIED SPOUSES OF U.S. CITIZENS WAITED MORE THAN SIX MONTHS FOR EXIT PERMISSION.

D. CZECHOSLOVAK AUTHORITIES GENERALLY ALLOW BINATIONAL MARRIAGES AND EMIGRATION OF THE CZECHOSLOVAK SPOUSE, PARTICULARLY IF A WOMAN.; PERMISSION IS NOT NORMALLY GRANTED TO MARRY ABROAD, AND DIFFICULTIES SOMETIMES ARISE WHEN THE INTENDED SPOUSE IS PERSONAL NON GRATA IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA.

7. ITEM 10 -- TRAVEL AND TOURISM

A. DEPARTMENT PROVIDING DATA.

B. WE DO NOT HAVE FIGURES FOR TOTAL NIV ISSUANCE BY CZECHOSLOVAKIA.

C. MOST U.S. TOURIST VISAS ARE ISSUED IMMEDIATELY. MORE COMPLEX NIV CASES--PARTICULARLY WHEN A 212(A)(38) WAIVER IS REQUIRED
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PAGE 04 PRAGUE 00958 02 OF 03 150354Z

-MAY TAKE THREE WEEKS OR MORE. NIV COSTS 88KCS OR \$9.67 AT TOURIST RATE.

D.. SINCE MAY, 1976, VISITORS FROM NON-COMMUNIST COUNTRIES HAVE BEEN

OBLIGED TO EXCHANGE A MINIMUM OF TEN DOLLARS OR THE EQUIVALENT DAILY.
THOSE VISITING RELATIVE MAY PAY A REDUCED MINIMUM OF FJZT#DOLLARS.

E. THOSE VISITING IMMEDIATE RELATIVES "LEGALLY" RESIDENT ABROAD
AND THOSE JOINING A CEDOK TOUR CAN OBTAIN AN EXIT PERMIT WITHIN ABOUT
ONE MONTH; INDIVIDUALS MUST APPLY, IN JANUARY, FOR A HARD
CURRENCY ALLOTMENT.

F. THERE HAS BEEN LITTLE IMPROVEMENT IN THE CZECHOSLOVAK
PERFORMANCE ON VISA AND HUMANITARIAN MATTERS RELATED TO TRAVEL
AND TOURISM. IN THE COMPARATIVELY RECENT PAST, THE AUTHORITIES HAVE
DISPLAYED A NOTABLE LACK OF FLEXIBILITY IN DEALING WITH CASES OF
AMERICANS WHO WISHED TO VISIT CSSR FOR A HUMANITARIAN REASON
OF ONE SORT OR ANOTHER(VISA SUPPORT CASES).

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PAGE 01 PRAGUE 00958 03 OF 03 150404Z
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 3 OF 3 PRAGUE 0958

8. ITEM II - INFORMATION

A. CSSR MFA CLAIMS THAT CSR IS IMPORTING A TOTAL OF 1,889 TITLES
REPRESENTING 10,832 ISSUES, AND SSR IS IMPORTING 1,404 TITLES
REPRESENTING 4,536 ISSUES. WE ASSUME THERE IS SOME OVERLAP IN
THESE FIGURES, BUT THERE IS NO WAY TO DETERMINE TO WHAT EXTENT.
ALSO, WE HAVE NO WAY OF DETERMINING WHAT PERCENTAGE OF THOSE
IMPORTED ARE U.S. COMMUNIST PUBLICATIONS.

B. IN MARCH, 1977 A FEW COPIES OF WESTERN PUBLICATIONS STARTED
APPEARING AT SEVERAL PRGUE HOTELS AND AT AIRPORT, BUT IRREGULARLY.

WHILE SALE OF INTERNATIONAL HERALD TRIBUNE HAS BEEN REPORTED, NO ONE ON EMBASSY STAFF HAS ACTUALLY SEEN ONE "LIVE." EVEN THIS TOKEN REPRESENTATION OF WESTERN MEDIA HAS SINCE DWINDLED, ALTHOUGH ONE CAN STILL FIND AN ODD FINANCIAL TIMES OR L'HUMANITE. CZECHOSLOVAKS CAN RECEIVE U.S. PUBLICATION WHICH GOC DOES NOT CONSIDER OFFENSIVE, PROVIDING SUBSCRIBER CAN PAY IN HARD

CURRENCY FOR SUCH PUBLICATIONS. CZECHS WE HAVE SPOKE TO WHO SUBSCRIBE

TO NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC AND OTHER JOURNALS SAY THEY ACTUALLY RECEIVE LESS THAN HALF OF THE ISSUES.

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PAGE 02 PRAGUE 00958 03 OF 03 150404Z

C, SINCE HELSINKI, GOC HAS NOT RELAXED ITS STRICT CONTROL AND CENSORSHIP OF PRINTED MATERIALS APPRECIABLY. IN DECEMBER, 1976, EMBASSY WAS NOTIFIED THAT IT COULD INCREASE MAIL DISTRIBUTION OF USIS QUARTERLY CZECH-LANGUAGE PUBLICATION, SPEKTRUM, FROM 2000 TO 6000 COPIES PER ISSUE. EXCEPT FOR TOKEN SALE OF SOME NON-COMMUNIST NEWSPAPERS AT HOTELS, THERE HAS BEEN NO OTHER SIGNIFICANT PROGRESS.

D. WE ESTIMATE THAT 10-15 AMERICAN FILMS WERE SHOWN IN CINEMAS THROUGHOUT CSSR, FOUR FEATURE FILMS WERE AIRED ON TELEVISION, AS WELL AS THREE EPISODES OF TWO AMERICAN SERIALS (KOJAK AND COLOMBO).

E. PERCENTAGE OF BROADCASTS JAMMED-VOA IS NOT SYSTEMATICALLY JAMMED. AS FOR RFE AND RL, WE ACCEPT THESE STATIONS' OWN ESTIMATE THAT THEY REMAIN SUBJECT TO "HEAVY" JAMMING. WE DO NOT KNOW ABOUT RIAS.

F. THERE HAS BEEN NO INCREASE IN THE AMOUNT AND PARTICULARLY IN THE VARIETY OF FILMED AND BROADCAST INFORMATION FROM THE WEST USED BY CZECHOSLTTAK MEDIA. WESTERN MATERIALS DEALING WITH SOCIETAL, ECONOMIC AND OTHER PROBLEMS IN THE WEST ARE CONSISTENTLY GIVEN WIDE DISTRIBUTION TO THE VIRTUAL EXCLUSION OF MORE POSITIVE MATERIALS. THEY ARE ALSO SUBJECTED TO CENSORSHIP.

9. ITEM 12--WORKING CONDITIONS FOR JOURNALISTS

A. IN THE LAST SIX MONTHS APPROXIMATELY SEVEN AMERICAN JOURNALISTS HAVE OBTAINED CZECHOSLOVAK VISAS FOR INDIVIDUAL VISITS.

B. TWO AMERICAN JOURNALISTS (LESLIE COLLITT OF NBC AND MURRAY SEEGER OF L.A. TIMES) WERE REFUSED ENTRY TO CZECHOSLOVAKIA DURING THE SIX-MONTH PERIOD JUST ENDED.

C. APPROXIMATELY TWO VISAS FOR JOURNALISTS WERE DELAYED OVER
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PAGE 03 PRAGUE 00958 03 OF 03 150404Z

SIX MONTHS.

D. THERE IS ONE AMERICAN JOURNALIST, WHO WRITES PART-TIME FOR THE CPUSA, PERMANENTLY ACCREDITED TO PRAGUE. TWO OTHERS ARE CURRENTLY SEEKING ACCREDITATION, ONE FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES.

E. NO AMERICAN JOURNALISTS HAVE BEEN EXPELLED IN THE LAST SIX MONTHS.

F. THERE HAS BEEN VIRTUALLY NO IMPROVEMENT IN THE GOC'S PERFORMANCE WITH REGARD TO ACCESS TO SOURCES, FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT, AND FREEDOM TO IMPORT TECHNICAL EQUIPMENT. ALTHOUGH CZECH CONSULS

ARE NO LONGER DEMANDING THAT JOURNALISTS PROMISE TO REFRAIN FROM CONTACTING LOCAL DISSIDENTS, THE LATENT THREAT OF HAVING THEIR NOTES SEIZED AS THEY DEPART (AS HAPPENED TO LESLIE COLLITT OF NBC AND PAUL HOFFMAN OF THE NEW YORK TIMES) IS ONE WITH WHICH VISITING JOURNALISTS HAVE TO CONTEND.

G. FOUR U.S. VISAS WERE GRANTED TO CZECHOSLOVAK JOURNALISTS IN THE LAST SIX MONTHS OF 1977 FOR TEMPORARY VISITS. THERE ARE PERMANENT CORRESPONDENTS OF RUDE PRAVO AND CTK IN WASHINGTON AND A CZECHOSLOVAK RADIO CORRESPONDENT IN NEW YORK.

H. NO U.S. VISA WAS REFUSED TO A CZECHOSLOVAK JOURNALIST IN THE LAST SIX MONTHS OF 1977. ONE VISA WAS WITHDRAWN IN MARCH, 1978 HOWEVER, IN RETALIATION FOR REFUSAL TO GRANT NBC REPORTER A VISA TO CSSR.

I. NO U.S. VISA WAS DELAYED MORE THAN SIX MONTHS.

10. OBJECTIVELY LITTLE HAS CHANGED IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA SINCE THE HELSINKI FINAL ACT THAT WOULD NOT HAVE COME ABOUT THROUGH THE AGENCY OF OTHER FACTORS SUCH AS BILATERAL RELATIONS: FOR EXAMPLE, SOME THREE HUNDRED GERMAN EMIGRATION CASES WERE SOLVED RECENTLY AS A PRELUDE TO THE VISIT OF PRESIDENT HUSAK TO BONN. YET IT SHOULD
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PAGE 04 PRAGUE 00958 03 OF 03 150404Z

BE RECALLED IN EVALUATING THE HELSINKI FINAL ACT THAT IT PROVIDED THE IMPULSE FOR CHARTER 77, THE EFFECTS OF WHICH CONTINUE TO MULTIPLY, EVEN IF IN THE SHORT RUN THE CHARTER MAY HAVE SET THE CAUSE OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA BACK A FEW STEPS. LOOKING AHEAD SPECULATIVELY, WE CANNOT BUT BELIEVE THAT THE GOC WILL BECOME, AT THE LEAST, MORE CONCERNED ABOUT ITS INTERNAL AND INTERNATIONAL IMAGE. THIS TENDENCY, PARTICULARLY IF AN IMPROVING IMAGE BRINGS TANGIBLE BENEFITS, MAY HELP CZECHOSLOVAKIA TO BREAK THE VICIOUS CIRCLE OF REPRESSION, EXTERNAL CRITICISM AND MORE REPRESSION WHICH HAS PLAGUED IT SINCE 1969.

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